



## Ken Field

Owner of Slate Belt Energy Services

*Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times*

### Get Tailored Comfort

People go to a lot of trouble to make sure their clothes fit them correctly. After all, it's one of the things others see when they meet you and they might think less of you with clothes that were 2X too large for you. Plus they would be uncomfortable. Imagine flopping around in shoes that were way too big. This is proof that bigger isn't always better.

If you didn't understand sizes, you could have an expert measure you and they would show you clothing that was appropriate and comfortable. It is painfully obvious that one size does not fit all and that applies to much more than clothing.

Every home has a specific amount of energy that is required to keep the indoor temperature in your comfort zone. It has to do with many factors. For instance, what is the home made of, what is the total size, how many windows and doors and what size are they, what direction do they face, is there insulation in the walls and the attic, how many people live there, and the list goes on. When all of these factors are taken into consideration the final result is expressed in Btus (British thermal units). The Btu is defined as the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of one pound of water by one degree Fahrenheit. That seems irrelevant but it is the standard unit of measure. In our local area the number of Btus required to heat a home is just about double the number of Btus required to cool it. If your home needs 48,000 Btus of heat to keep it comfortable in the winter, it will take just about 24,000 Btus of cooling to keep it comfortable in the summer. Humidity also requires energy to be removed in the summer and that is a part of the cooling Btu requirement.

If homeowners knew the Btu requirements of their home they could shop for replacement equipment much more intelligently. Heck, if most contractors knew those numbers, they could recommend the correct equipment once in a while too. Almost every piece of equipment I see in the field is oversized by a large margin. Usually 50-100%. It makes me sad because these homes will never be truly comfortable and the energy cost will never be as low as it could be. If the equipment lasts 20 years it will be 20 years of missed opportunity and making due with the wrong system for the house.

It is not wrong to talk Btus with your contractor. Ask for a load calculation. You deserve it.

*Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email Ken@FieldsService.com*



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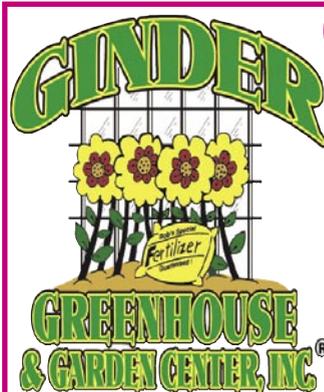
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